ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS—*Contd.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question; Question No. 130; Shri Thanga Tamil Selvan;

*130. [The Questioner (SHRI THANGA TAMIL SELVAN) was absent. For answer *vide* page 40 *infra*]

Construction of a Stadium in Guyana by India

*131. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY:††

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India promised to Guyana to finance and construct a stadium by the year 2007; and

(b) if so, the grant released so far towards its construction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government of India (GoI) has agreed at the request of the Government of Guyana to finance the construction of a cricket stadium in Georgetown, Guyana

(b) An Agreement was signed on 11 November, 2004 under which the GoI has committed a grant of US$ 6 million to the Government of Guyana. Another agreement was signed by EXIM Bank for a Line of Credit (LoC) of US$ 19 million with the Minister of Finance, Government of Guyana for the project. No grant or credit funds have been released so far. The first installment of the grant of US$ 1.5 million is to be released at the time of award of the contract, which is expected in February, 2005. The project is expected to be completed by October, 2006 to be ready for the World Cup 2007.

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, the construction of a stadium in Carribean was promised by the then hon. Prime Minister,

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††The questions was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Ravula Chandra Sekar Reddy.

Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, during the visit of Guyana's President, Shri Bharrat Jagdeo to India. Sir, it was accepted long back during his visit. It is pending. There was a new item that there was a rift between the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Foreign Affairs on this matter. regarding. Sir, I would like to know whether it is a fact? If not, what is the status now?

SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH: Sir, there is a commitment that has been made; there is no rift. We will provide US$25 million to the Government of Guyana to construct this stadium and will start construction in February next year.

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, the World Cup is fast approaching; it would be held during 2007. A match was also awarded to this area by virtue of our commitment to that Government that we are going to build a stadium by 2007. But so far, no work has commenced, and as per the reply given by the hon. Minister, no money has been released so far.

Sir, we have to keep our word and we must try to improve our image outside India. Will the hon. Minister come up with a specific time schedule in this regard?

SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH: Sir, there is a time schedule that the cricket stadium would be constructed by 2006, and would be ready for the World Cup to be held in 2007. The first instalment will be released, as I have said, at the time of awarding the contract. The contract is likely to be awarded by the Government of Guyana in the early part of next year. Thereafter, we would start by releasing US $ 1.5 million and we would complete the whole project by 2006.

*132. [The questioner (SHRI R.S. GAVAI) was absent For answer *vide* page 45 infra.]

Illegal Telephone Exchanges in Delhi

*133. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state: